



Office of the City Clerk

City Hall
121 N. LaSalle St.
Room 107
Chicago, IL 60602
www.chicityclerk.com

Legislation Text

File #: R2022-434, **Version:** 1

WGN Radio 100th Anniversary Resolution

WHEREAS, WGN Radio has been the 50,000-watt voice of "Chicago's Very Own" for 100 years, and the station serves Chicagoland and the Midwest with news, talk, sports, and is currently located at 303 E. Wacker Drive; and

WHEREAS, Over the years, the station has also been headquartered at the Wrigley Building, The Drake Hotel, Tribune Tower, and the WGN Mid-America Broadcast Center at Bradley Place; and

WHEREAS, WGN Radio's origins trace back to May 19, 1922, when two young Chicagoans and radio enthusiasts named Thorne Donnelley and Elliott Jenkins signed on with the call letters WDAP from the Wrigley Building; and

WHEREAS, Under the leadership of Col. Robert McCormick, the call letters WGN, "World's Greatest Newspaper", were obtained from a Great Lakes skipper in 1924 and an association with WDAP began; and

WHEREAS, On May 31, the station was the first to broadcast what is now known as the Indy 500, then called the Memorial Day 500, and during the seven-hour race coverage, listeners heard a new station identification: "This is WDAP, soon to be WGN;" and

WHEREAS, On June 1, 1924, the new name was made official when announcer Elliott Jenkins came on-air with the words "This is WGN, formerly WDAP;" and

WHEREAS, WGN was a trailblazer in the early days of radio - being the first station of note to carry the Memorial Day 500 and the first to broadcast a regular season baseball game in 1925; and

WHEREAS, WGN set a record for long distance remote broadcasts in 1932 and delivered the first live broadcast of a courtroom trial in American history: The Scopes Monkey Trial in Tennessee, "the trial of the century;" and

WHEREAS, WGN radio announcer and later its general manager Quin Ryan reflected upon these groundbreaking broadcasts saying, "We broadcast these things because somebody had to do it, and we decided to be the first to do it;" and

WHEREAS, Over the years, station programming has included live music with big band orchestras, comedy and drama shows, police bulletins, baseball games, football games, and debates, as well as local and world news; and

WHEREAS, WGN has also been part of the fabric of Chicago sports and has previously been the voice of the Chicago Cubs, Chicago White Sox, and Chicago Bears, and WGN Radio is currently the flagship for the Chicago Blackhawks and Northwestern Wildcats football and men's basketball; and

WHEREAS, WGN Radio has a rich history of supporting the local community through events and fundraisers, and the station has also been recognized with numerous awards from broadcasting

I

and journalism organizations including ten Marconi Awards from the National Association of Broadcasters; and

WHEREAS, A few of the well-known personalities heard on the station over the years included names such as Wally Phillips, Bob Collins, Roy Leonard, Pierre Andre, Quin Ryan, Milt Rosenberg, Franklyn MacCormack, Eddie Schwartz, Spike O'Dell, Steve King and Johnnie Putman, Kathy O'Malley and Judy Markey, Orion Samuelson, Jack Brickhouse, Lou Boudreau, Vince Lloyd, and more; and

WHEREAS, Voices in the current lineup include Bob Sirott, John Williams, Lisa Dent, John Landecker, Lou Manfredini, Steve Bertrand, Anna Davlantes, Dean Richards, Steve Dale, Dave Plier, and Jon Hansen, and these voices connect with listeners, establishing a high level of trust; and

WHEREAS, In the words of announcer Pierre Andre, "God bless to the hundreds of talented men and women who've made us what we are. And it's God bless to a faithful audience;" now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that we the Mayor and the members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, gathered here this twenty-seventh day of April, 2022, do hereby honor WGN Radio on their 100th Anniversary and declare May 19 WGN Radio Day; and

Brendan Reilly Alderman, 42nd Ward President Pro Tempore

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented to WGN Radio.

2